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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for treating sphincter deficiencies comprising
a syringe containing a bulking agent; and
a hypodermic needle connected to and extending between about 1.5 and about 5 inches from the syringe, the needle having, a linear segment extending from a hub of the syringe and an arcuate segment formed by a about a 15 degree bend located within a position of the needle closest to a needle tip, and the needle being configured to deliver delivering bulking agent into a tissue plane between ~~an esophagus,~~ a rectum or urethra, and a surrounding sphincter muscle.

2-4 (Cancelled).

5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said hypodermic needle is sufficiently rigid so as to maintain the arcuate segment while retaining a minimal amount of flexure to allow proper insertion of the needle into tissue.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein a penetration depth shield is located on the linear segment of the hypodermic needle and limits tissue penetration of the needle.

7-11 (Cancelled).

12. (Currently Amended) A needle kit for treating stress urinary incontinence, comprising:
a syringe ~~adapted to contain~~ containing a bulking agent;
a hypodermic needle comprising a needle having a length of about 1.5 to 5 inches linear segment ~~adapted to extend~~ extending from a hub of the syringe and an arcuate segment formed by about a 15 degree bend located within a portion of the needle closest to a tip of the needle;
and
an injectable bulking agent.

13. (Original) The kit of claim 12, wherein said bulking agent is comprised of a plurality of discrete carbon coated particles in a carrier.

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14. (Previously Presented) The kit of claim 13, wherein said carbon coated particles have an average transverse cross-sectional dimension of between 100 and 1000 microns.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Previously Presented) The kit of claim 12 further comprising a penetration depth shield.

17. (Cancelled).